

PORTLAND, MAINE.

Monday Morning, February 2, 1863.

The Portland Daily Press has the latest regular circulation of any daily paper in the city.

Outlet for Western Products.

The agency of steam locomotion in opening up and developing the great fertile West, is admitted on all hands, and we have been accustomed to the idea that, but for the agency of steam, the most productive portion of the world—the granary for this country and Europe—would be either a desert or, at any rate, very far from what it now is in population, in production, in wealth, in refinement, in commanding influence, and in all that makes up a prosperous and attractive country.

But if any one supposes by steam is meant simply the steam navigation of the Mississippi river, and particularly of the lower Mississippi, he never labored under a more perfect hallucination in his life. Before the war commenced the lower Mississippi had, to a very large extent, ceased to form the outlet for the products of the great and teeming region referred to. True, the steamboat was a vast improvement upon the old-fashioned raft and flat boats, on which the products of the West formed their tedious way to New Orleans. When no more speedy mode of communication with the seaboard was known, a steamer that could thread two hundred miles of that sinuous river in twenty-four hours, though she did not gain in a direct line toward her destination one-fourth that distance, was looked upon as a marvel of inland commercial convenience, but now that the country is all a network of iron rails, by which the great West is brought within two days of New York, Boston and Portland, and over which freight may be transported at the rate of thirty miles an hour without exposure to the elements or danger from "wags," the river steamer appears to be as far in the rear as did the flat-boat when viewed from the deck of the first steamer that ascended the "Father of Waters." The railroads, striking the Mississippi at LaCrosse, Prairie du Chien, Dunleith, Fulton, Quincy, Alton, opposite St. Louis, Cairo and other localities, all pointing eastward to the Atlantic ports, have provided like so many dikes to absorb the business of transportation formerly carried on upon the river, and which, but for these roads, would necessarily center at New Orleans as the common depot for the exports of the West.

Not only so, but the tide of the Mississippi current of commerce has been, to a large extent, turned up-stream, even from as far down as Memphis. Cotton has been transported by river from the latter city to Cairo, there to take the rails for the northern manufacturing, and we think in some instances, for foreign export from the port of New York. Still further, in consequence of the burdensome port charges at New Orleans, excessive rates of tonnage, oppressive monopoly in the cotton compress business, and the exactions of the stevedores, all combined to deplete the northern shipowner, the great southern staples had commenced, before the war, to find their way by rail from the Mississippi at Memphis and Vicksburg, and from the tributaries of that river, to Charleston and Savannah, where such burdens and oppressions had not become so rife. We mention these facts only to show how insignificant, in a commercial point of view, the Mississippi has become, compared with the importance that attached to it when Mr. Jefferson regarded the possession of its mouth as a national necessity, to secure which a foreign war would be justified. To show how the trade of the West has shifted its channels, we give the following facts and figures, copied from the Springfield Republican:

There is a large trade of the upper valleys of the Mississippi with New Orleans, but it is not a tithe of the trade of that valley with the eastern sea ports, and the increased facilities of railroad transportation eastward have caused the commerce with the East to gain rapidly upon that of the Mississippi for the last twenty years. The census statistics are conclusive on this subject. The entire exports from New Orleans, of produce brought down the Mississippi, amounted in 1860 to \$2,500,000. In the same year there were carried by railroad, and canal to eastern ports, produce to the amount of \$225,000,000. Western merchants say that nearly the whole trade of the West, as far down as Cairo, Illinois, had been turned into eastern channels before 1860, and that in five years more of peace the new lines of railroad would have secured the trade of the valley to the East as far down as Memphis. The West wants the Mississippi open to her commerce, and will have it, but it is a mistake to suppose that she depends upon her southern trade for any considerable share of her prosperity, and if she could succeed in diverting the current of trade from its now preferred channel, she would only impoverish herself by the operation.

Col. Charles W. Roberts. Editors of the Press.—GENTLEMEN:—I noticed in your issue of Saturday an item which does great injustice to this gallant officer, and which I cannot allow to pass the rounds of the press without correction. I have no authority for commenting upon it except that which an intimate acquaintance from boyhood, and a thorough knowledge of his private life and character, may certainly give to one who has enjoyed these privileges.

Col. Roberts, at the time of the breaking out of the rebellion, resided at Bangor in the midst of a circle endeared to him by all the ties of nature and friendship, free from the necessity of seeking the army as a means of livelihood, an only son, and engaged in a lucrative business. He was associated in the State Militia, as it then existed, as an officer with the lamented JAMESON, and the gallant VANNEY, his successor in the office of Colonel of 2d Maine regiment.

From motives of pure patriotism, devoted attachment to the principles of the government and the preservation of the country, these three brave men, in command of the regiment with which they had long connected, staked their lives and their honor upon the hazard of the battle. Right well have they on many fields withstood the hosts of the enemy and defended their country from the assaults of its would-be destroyers. Gen. Jameson, borne down by disease contracted in the service, has passed through the straight and narrow path to that home where the slurs of the envious and the invectives of the malignant can never more disturb his repose. Col. Roberts, entering the service for three months, has continued to lead his regiment for nearly two years. The anxiety and entreaties of a fond mother have never been allowed that influence which a true and noble son could no longer withstand; he has resigned his commission to one whom he knew could and would faithfully discharge the duties of the office, and has retired to private life honored and beloved by all who know him. Col. Vanney will yet lead his deeds speak for him.

Let no man attribute to Col. Charles W. Roberts of the 2d Maine, "the sin and folly of youthful ambition" as the cause of his resignation. His soul soars above such motives, and the fallen men of the heroic 2d Maine, who have in times gone by followed where he led, would have from his bloody graves to rebuke the foul imputation.

LEGISLATURE OF MAINE.

[SPECIAL DISPATCH TO THE DAILY PRESS.]

Augusta, Jan. 31.

SENATE.

Saturday, Prayer by Rev. Mr. Bailey of Gardiner.

Papers from the House were disposed of in accordance.

Read and assigned.—Resolve in favor of County Law Libraries; Act to amend Chap. 12, Sec. 14, R. S.; Act to incorporate the South Jefferson Bog Company.

Finally passed.—Resolve providing for a loan (\$525,000) in behalf of the State; resolves relating to defenses on the North-Eastern frontier.

Passed by yeas and nays.—Resolve for the purchase of Putnam's improved cyclot hook; Act to incorporate the Vassalboro Mills Co.

Mr. Emerson presented the petition of John M. Swayze et al., for an Act of incorporation.

Mr. Spring, from the Committee on Banks and Banking, reported legislation in expedient order and to issue fractional currency.

Adjournd.

Prayer by Rev. Mr. McKenzie of Augusta.

Papers from the Senate were disposed of in accordance.

The order directing the State Prison Committee to visit that institution, came from the Senate, that body adhering to its vote. The House adhered to its vote indefinitely postponing the order.

Mr. Cony, from the Committee on State Lands, reported a resolve to amend the resolve extending the terms of the laws for the settlement of public lands to volunteers. Read and Monday assigned.

Mr. Watson, from the Committee on change of names, reported a bill to change the names of certain persons. Read and assigned.

On motion of Mr. Dyer of New Sharon, it was ordered that the Judiciary Committee be instructed to enquire what legislation is necessary to secure the collection of highway taxes, when the same are, by vote of towns, to be paid either in labor or materials.

Finally passed.—Resolve authorizing loan in behalf of the State; resolves relating to the defense of our North-Eastern frontier.

Passed by yeas and nays.—Act authorizing Albert Truitt et al., to extend a wharf in Harpswell; Act to amend Chap. 113 of the laws of 1862, relating to the assessment of taxes in certain towns and plantations; Act to incorporate Baldwin Mutual Fire Insurance Co.; Act to incorporate the Portland Grain Warehouse Co.; Resolve for the purchase of Putnam's improved cyclot hook.

Adjournd.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

Saturday. At the suggestion of Mr. Wasson, the Committee on the sixth topic were allowed to report at the next session.

On motion of Mr. Waterman, the report of the Committee on the Pay-roll was taken up and adopted.

Mr. Waterman's paper on the rotation of crops, was again read, amended, and adopted.

The report and resolves of Mr. Chamberlain, relative to the disposition of the State bounty, were taken up. A wide range of debate took place. The resolves proposed to direct County Societies to donate half of the State bounty in premiums, in a certain direction.

Mr. Goodale moved to amend, by directing the County Societies to offer one-fourth part of the State bounty in premiums for grain and root crops. The amendment was adopted, and on motion of Mr. Wasson, the report and resolves, as amended, were re-committed.

On motion of Mr. Wasson, the report and resolutions on stock growing were taken from the table. Mr. W. moved certain amendments, which were rejected, and the resolves were again tabled.

Adjournd to afternoon.

Mr. Leach's paper on the application of manures to the surface was again read and adopted.

Mr. Dill presented a paper on the importance of statistics in agriculture, which was read and Monday assigned.

Mr. Peck's paper on fruit culture was again read and assigned.

The resolves on stock husbandry were amended and adopted.

A communication received from Dr. Gould, on the injurious effects of mixed crops, was read. **Adjournd to Monday.**

ATLANTA, Jan. 31.

It is understood that the Committee on elections will report in the Somerville election case in favor of John W. Gold, the republican candidate. It was proved that he had a clear majority of the vote.

The Universalist Society of this place will hold their usual service on Wednesday and Thursday evenings of next week. The object is to raise money for church purposes.

Official notice has been received of the resignation and honorable discharge of Chaplain Phineas Higgins, 21st Me.; Capt. George N. Hall, 24th Me.; 2d Lieut. Marcus Rowell, 24th Me.; Capt. Jeremiah W. Marsh, 25th Maine; Chaplain F. A. Hodson, 24th Me.; Col. Rufus P. Tapley, 27th Me.

Mr. Corson, the military agent at Philadelphia, reported to the Governor that the general condition of the Maine men in hospitals is now better in two respects—First—the average of convalescences is greater. Many will, after a stay of a few weeks, be able to resume service. These men generally were in a broken down condition, and a short stay braces them up, both in spirits and in health. Second—the patients are now visiting their hospitals. The men feel better when Mr. Corson says he is about adopting measures to ascertain the numbers and condition of our sick and wounded in Baltimore.

From the Maine 24th.

A letter in the Boston Journal, dated on board the transport ship Little Southard, off Fortress Monroe, Jan. 26th, says:

The 24th Maine regiment left this place this morning for New Orleans, or at least nine companies, Co. K having gone in the ship Onward, with six companies of the 21st, some two weeks ago. We left New York Jan. 12, and arrived here Sunday night, and since that time have been laying off the Fort waiting for a fair wind. We have on board six hundred men and about thirty officers. The health of the regiment is as good as could be expected, where so many are crowded in together. Since laying here we have sent to the hospital nineteen men, from the following companies:

Co. A—Edward Brown, Oscar O. Work, and Corporal Albin Gray; Co. B—M. L. Alden, and C. R. Dutton; Co. C—George Ogilvie, Charles E. Bowdoin, Co. E—Daniel Brooks, Sergt. Wm. E. Smith; Co. F—Sergt. Lorenzo M. Tarr, Wm. Wyman Allen, F. Barrows, W. M. Wilson; Co. G—D. D. Wins, Sumner Haskell, Charles F. Lord; Co. H—Jeremiah Durkin; Co. I—Charles M. Ware, Timothy Sheehy. Edward Brown, Co. A, died with the dysentery; the others are doing well. The regiment went ashore Saturday and visited the Fort, and many places of interest. After a good healthy ramble they returned to the ship in much better spirits.

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE IN BIDEFORD.—We learn that a fire broke out in Bideford Friday night, destroying the building known as McKenney's Hall, which was occupied by nine Irish families, Langley's stable was also destroyed. A fish house near the covered bridge and a stable back of the City Hall were also destroyed by fire the same night. All of these conflagrations are supposed to be the work of incendiaries.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED.

TO THE

EVENING PAPERS.

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On the first page.—Letter from the Twenty-Third Maine.

On the fourth page.—A Dream, by Florence Perry, of Superstition.

A young man in Bangor has been fined \$10 and costs for making a disturbance at the Union Street Methodist Church in that city.

The Augusta Age makes a fling at Gen. Hitchcock as a "demagogue." The Age is evidently determined to descend to the "lower depth" of infamy.

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A dispatch from St. Thomas, Jan. 19th, received at Merchants' Exchange, Boston, says, "The brig J. P. Elliott, Capt. Devereux, from Boston for Cienfuegos, was captured by the rebel privateer Retribution."

The Ellsworth American says that a little girl of Ambrose Hamblin, of Deer Isle, aged four years, was burned so badly by her clothes taking fire, on the 14th inst., that she died the next day.

A complimentary dinner was recently given to Gen. Pope in New York, by Mayor Opdyke, at which the Gen. made a very handsome and patriotic speech in response to a complimentary toast.

The Washington Star says it is understood that Gen. Hooker has already his plan of campaign well chalked out, and with the very first opportunity for breaking the mud blockade he will enter upon its active development.

The Farmington Patriot is alarmed lest Congress should pass a conscription law. The fellows who paddle that canoe want the privilege of looking on and seeing others do the fighting, while they do the fault-finding. The idea of being compelled to defend their country is by no means palatable.

The Brunswick Telegraph says, "Mr. Callicott, a Democrat nominated by the Republicans, has been elected speaker of the New York Assembly. The other officers of the same faith were elected." Doubtful things are very uncertain, and so is the precise "faith" of those "other officers."

If any poor wretch in this world is to be pitied, it is that man who is so wedded to a false theory, that he feels restrained from doing right, from following his best instincts, and from listening to the voice of God and of conscience, by his supposed obligations to a wicked, heaven-daring, man-enslaving and God-dishonoring institution.

We learn from the Rockland Gazette that on Monday of last week the dwelling-house of Mr. Henry McIntosh, in that city, was destroyed by fire. Loss \$1200; insured for \$600. On Tuesday night the boat-builder's shop of Mr. Calvin Hall, was entirely consumed. The building contained considerable property of various kinds, and the loss was not less than \$600.

The letter from "Subaltern" which we publish to-day, must close a dispute which has no longer any public interest. Our correspondent "Quis" rather tartly contradicted assertions, which "Subaltern" was entitled to defend. With that defense the hearing in these columns must close. There are other and more appropriate methods of further prosecuting the case, should that be necessary or desirable.

At the recent trial at Wiscasset, our Messrs. Clark and Brown, the former not long since of the Boston Courier, and the other editor of a leading Democratic paper in Vermont. In the Delta of Jan. 15th, we find the following severe rebuke of the Courier from one of the editors—one of those wounds of a friend, "which the royal Hebrew had declared to be 'fatal!'"

If the acting editor of the Boston Courier is satisfied with the facts contained in the letter purporting to have been written here and published in his paper on the 3d inst., we are only, let us add, that the writer, whoever he is, is a slanderer and a poisoner, and the acting editor is a quack, who endorses the letter, is not much better. The hypocritical cant about "just indignation of offended honesty," reminds us of a harlot's sigh. It is singular that the editor of the Boston Courier has produced should be thus slandered in the only Maine newspaper, and that, too, by a selfish growler and common scold. Boston papers please copy.

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The letter from "Subaltern" which we publish to-day, must close a dispute which has no longer any public interest. Our correspondent "Quis" rather tartly contradicted assertions, which "Subaltern" was entitled to defend. With that defense the hearing in these columns must close. There are other and more appropriate methods of further prosecuting the case, should that be necessary or desirable.

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If the acting editor of the Boston Courier is satisfied with the facts contained in the letter purporting to have been written here and published in his paper on the 3d inst., we are only, let us add, that the writer, whoever he is, is a slanderer and a poisoner, and the acting editor is a quack, who endorses the letter, is not much better. The hypocritical cant about "just indignation of offended honesty," reminds us of a harlot's sigh. It is singular that the editor of the Boston Courier has produced should be thus slandered in the only Maine newspaper, and that, too, by a selfish growler and common scold. Boston papers please copy.

Severe Rap on the Knuckles. The editors of the New Orleans Delta, our Messrs. Clark and Brown, the former not long since of the Boston Courier, and the other editor of a leading Democratic paper in Vermont. In the Delta of Jan. 15th, we find the following severe rebuke of the Courier from one of the editors—one of those wounds of a friend, "which the royal Hebrew had declared to be 'fatal!'"

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